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To: Microsoft ATR
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Subject: Proposed settlement with Microsoft.

TRUTH, JUSTICE & THE AMERICAN WAY?

Have you guys ever heard of the doctrine of the Separation of Powers over there in the U.S.?

What is the point of having a judiciary if a sympathetic president can just step in, appoint a political glove puppet to the D.o.J., have a few words in the right ears, and then make a total mockery of the entire judicial process by effecting a complete about face, notwithstanding the fact that the earlier D.o.J. team secured comprehensive and devastating victories before nine different judges over eight egregious breaches of the anti-trust laws, laws as enacted by your own parliament???

It is VERY telling that, on the one hand John Ashcroft can claim that the proposed settlement provides prompt, effective, certain relief for consumers and removes the uncertainty in the computer market, a critical factor in today's economy [and that it] imposes a broad range of restrictions that will stop Microsoft's unlawful conduct and will restore competition in the industry², when the Justice Department's senior non-political staff didn't sign on to the agreement, signalling their opposition², on the other.

Did the Microsoft spin-meisters write those lines for him? No wonder Bill Gates is so keen to, implement this settlement promptly and fully²; it's about as onerous as having been legally obliged to open one's Christmas presents.

What does this mean about the facts and telling the truth? Were the original D.o.J. team lying? Were the nine judges stupid and got the whole thing wrong? Have the anti-trust laws suddenly changed? Why bother with the pretext of having a judiciary at all? Why not just dispense with them altogether and make the president a despot, as it wouldn't make much practical difference in the present circumstances? The parallels with this case and the means by which the present U.S. government rose to power are a little frightening!

Oh how hard it must be for Microsoft to keep a straight face; they have never had to fight a fair fight in their life, and if this joke of a settlement goes through, they probably never will.

In short, this smacks of cronyism and it belittles all arms of power by showing the divisions between them to be a mere charade staged to placate the public sense of democracy and justice. Truth, justice and the American way? From where I am standing, it sounds a little rich to me!

- ? Thank goodness for the States and for Federation in general!
- ? Thank goodness for the Tunney Act.
- ? Thank goodness for the E.C. investigation.
- ? Thank goodness that not everyone is in the pocket of Microsoft or the present administration in the U.S..